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ABSTRACT

A description is given of a cooperative teacher education program formed between a university and the public schools to provide substitute teaching service to the schools while the teacher-training programs at the university would be re-modeled to include substitute teaching as a training component. Graduate students who have completed a baccalaureate program in the arts and sciences are given training in substitute teaching as teacher interns. Their training involves observing a variety of classrooms and different teachers' approaches to classroom management, record-keeping, and questioning strategies. Seminars and workshops are part of the training as well as academic programs at the university in their subject field, and pedagogical instruction. The interns are supervised by a university supervisor, an academic advisor, and a personal counselor. The program lasts one year. A 6-year study was made on the self-perceptions of 30 interns as compared to a group of 20 student teachers, 25 regular substitute teachers, and 12 apprentice teachers. The interns were found to have higher self-perceptions and higher performance ratings than candidates in more traditional programs. Tables providing data obtained from the research are appended. (JD)

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THE NEW LOOK IN FIELD EXPERIENCE

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Dr. Louise M. Soares

ABSTRACT

The New Look in Field Experience

Substitute Teaching
as the Field Experience in
Teacher Education

In line with national reports on teacher education, an internship program in substitute teaching was designed for training candidates in the profession. As an integration of theory and practice, interns were found to have higher self-perceptions and to have higher performance ratings than candidates in more traditional programs.

NOTE: The author acknowledges the contributions of two administrative assistants in this research who had been interns: Valerie DesMarais who recently Connecticut Certification as a School Psychologist and Paul Boucher who recently obtained Connecticut Certification in Secondary Mathematics.

The New Look in Field Experience

SUBSTITUTE TEACHING AS THE FIELD EXPERIENCE IN TEACHER EDUCATION

The field-experience component in teacher training can take several forms. In the University Model, student teaching typically follows a prescribed set of courses in the liberal arts and sciences and professional training. It is viewed as the culminating experience in the program and precedes the first classroom job. New teachers usually view their student teaching as the most useful aspect of their preparation for the field (Nemser, 1983). Yet, the research suggests a quite different pattern, i.e., "the role of practice teaching in the preparation of teachers may be overrated" (Everston, Hawley, Zlotnik, 1985, p. 8). For example, Peck and Tucker (1973, p. 967) concluded, "there are some almost universally reported decrements in attitude and in teaching behavior" when comparing the end of student teaching to the beginning of their field experience. In a comprehensive study published a decade later, Griffin and his associates (1983) discovered that little change had occurred in the student teachers as a result of their practicum. Some of the reasons cited for the ineffectiveness of the student teaching experience include the lack of involvement of the university, little feedback from cooperating teachers, acute school pressures on the cooperating teachers, and insufficient

professional time with either the college supervisor or the cooperating teacher (Applegate & Lasley, 1982; Purcell & Seiferth, 1981; Rickman & Hollowell, 1981).

The Alternative Approach (a contemporary rendition of the "Apprenticeship Model") usually involves a graduate student, with no professional training but a baccalaureate major, in a school district, under the supervision of a mentor or master teacher. This is a form of on-the-job training; therefore, the school district rather than the teacher-training institution becomes the principal trainer. While this model appears to be popular with such groups as the National Governors' Association, the Holmes Group, the National Commission on Excellence in Teacher Education, and the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, new teachers need more than "depth in a discipline" to be successful professionals in the classroom. The first years of a new teacher's career are typically chaotic; and without adequate support, these new teachers are more likely to focus their attention on controlling student behavior rather than effective learning strategies (Hawley and Rosenholtz, 1984). Without the knowledge of the variety of instructional options, "the induction phase of a teacher's career more often narrows . . . the range of instructional strategies teachers perceive they can employ" (Everston, Hawley, & Zlotnik, 1985, p. 8). It would seem more helpful to have a repertoire of workable skills and knowledge of classroom realities, along with an understanding of the research on teaching, before tackling the learning needs of their own students for the first year

(Joyce & Showers, 1982). As other authors have concluded, "the available research suggests that among students who become teachers, those enrolled in formal preservice preparation programs are more likely to be effective than those who do not have such training" (Evertson, Hawley, & Zlotnik, 1986, p. 8).

The Internship Model, patterned after the training program in medical schools, combines some of the features from each of the other two models. Interns are graduate students who have already achieved a baccalaureate in some field other than education. Their graduate studies include both professional courses and a year-long internship in the schools under the supervision of both university and school personnel. Interns may join a team of educators, work under the supervision of several mentors, take over some paraprofessional responsibilities like small reading groups, undertake some limited teaching situations in the beginning and increase their teaching time over the year, or--as will be described in the following pages --assume substitute teaching assignments for a variety of classrooms and levels in one school placement with the emphasis on learning how to teach.

The Program.

In 1981 a partnership was formed between the university and the public schools in the region to provide substitute teaching services to the schools while the teacher-training programs at the university would be re-modeled to include subbing as a training component.

Graduate students who have completed a baccalaureate program in the arts and sciences are screened by the university for academic potential and also by the school district for placement at an elementary or secondary school. Once accepted, the Interns are given training in substitute teaching. They spend several days observing in the classrooms of their placement, learning the approaches by the different teachers in classroom management, record-keeping, questioning strategies, et cetera. During the first two weeks of observation and training, they attend seminars and workshops to discuss their experiences and to try out different approaches. They also begin their academic program of choice, leading primarily to certification in elementary or secondary education along with the master's degree. They take courses in educational psychology, growth and development, philosophical/historical foundations, exceptional children, computer technology, and methods. They review instructional materials previously prepared and create new materials as assigned. They also are given a workshop in "survival skills," which enables them to learn a number of strategies for critical situations--e.g., what to do when no lesson plans are found, when to call for help from the main office, how to handle a child who becomes ill, why a class progresses to a point of brinkmanship, and many other points of crisis.

The Interns are instructed to observe learning styles, teaching styles, evaluation techniques, and instructional devices. They are exposed to lesson presentation in the

various disciplines of science, mathematics, language arts, reading, and social studies, focusing on the points of similarities and uniqueness.

The Interns are expected at their school placements every day throughout the school's academic year but are allowed ten days for illness, family problems, and the like. They attend university classes late afternoon, evenings, Saturdays, or in weekend workshops, and summer seminars. The school districts pay full tuition for each of their Interns and a stipend for expenses (e.g., books, travel, liability insurance). The university provides an academic advisor for helping in planning an academic program, a field supervisor who visits on-site each assigned Intern three times during the semester and conducts additional seminars for sharing mutual concerns and acquiring more knowledge, and a personal counselor who assists in time management and problems in their personal lives. The program director visits each district for discussing concerns relevant to the individual districts and chairs a council of the district coordinators for continual updating and program improvements.

A year's schedule is presented in Figure 1, with two arrangements illustrated. Schedule (A) is the more typical since most students begin their internships in September. Schedule (B) allows interns to initiate their program in January.

The field supervisors generally come from two sources: (1) Faculty members at the university who are trained observers with experience in pre-university classrooms; and

(2) experienced classroom teachers who have retired or who are currently on a leave of absence. They frequently consult building administrators for professional and evaluative discussion. Each visit is recorded on a progress report, which is kept in the intern's folder. These assessments are later compared to the ratings from the district supervisor and the self-ratings provided by the interns twice each semester. (Examples of these forms are found in the appendix; complete scales can be obtained from the author.)

Each year's interns contribute to their successors in a number of other ways. They write back-up lesson plans and segments of classroom activities in each of the major content areas, typically culminating in a compilation of handbooks, software, video and audio cassettes, learning kits, documentation sets, and other educational materials.

Interns are not allowed to remain in one classroom beyond three weeks, or 15 consecutive school days, as long-term subs. To do otherwise might entangle the Interns in the legal restrictions from state certification regulations or in the implications of contractual arrangements found in faculty negotiations. Most states, however, will allow short-term subbing, or a series of short-term placements, on the part of graduates from accredited institutions of higher learning.

In terms of certification, some states will allow this year-long internship to take the place of student teaching. Others require a succeeding placement with one cooperating teacher at the level of subject in which they would subsequently

apply for certification. With the alternative route, the academic courses taken during the internship year, as well as the daily classroom experience, facilitate the apprenticeship and free the candidate from pursuing graduate studies simultaneously with the induction phase of a teacher's career. Other experienced interns are asked to take on a long-term sub position near the end of their year or arrange to teach in an accredited private school, both of which enable the Intern to waive student teaching.

The Research Design.

Data have been collected over the six years of the program on the self-perceptions of the Interns, performance ratings by supervisors, and two-year follow-up studies after graduation. In the research results to be reported here, one group of Interns (n = 30) was compared to a group of student teachers (n = 20), regular substitute teachers (n = 25), and apprenticed teachers (n = 12). These groups were also rated by university faculty and school principals. A pre/post design was formulated with an interval of three months.

Two sets of measurements were obtained from the subjects: (1) personal characteristics and (2) performance. More specifically under the category of personal characteristics, the following comparisons were analyzed:

a. "Self as a Person" scale from the Self-Perception Inventory/Adult Forms

b. "Self as a Teacher" scale from the Self-Perception Inventory/Teacher Forms

c. "Perceptions of Others" scale from the Self-Perception Inventory/Teacher Forms, completed by the building principals and university faculty

d. Pre/post comparisons

The Self-Perception Inventory (SPI) is a forced-choice type of semantic differential containing four categories maintained along a continuum between two dichotomous traits. This format thereby provides both direction and intensity of response. The purpose of the inventory is the assessment of a multivariate image of self by way of self-reports and ratings by others. Reliability coefficients (of internal consistency and stability) range from .79 to .94. Validity coefficients (of criterion and construct) have stabilized between .55 and .74 (Soares & Soares, 1986). There are several scales in each of the four forms--Students, Adults, Teachers, and Nurses. The scales used in the present study included "Self as a Person" from the SPI/Adult Forms, "Self as a Teacher" from the SPI/Teacher Forms, and the corresponding scales--called, the "Perceptions of Others" to compare with "Self as a Teacher"--to be used with the supervisors. (Sample items in Appendix.)

The performance ratings were obtained from the building principals and the university faculty on a three-point scale of "excellent," "satisfactory," and "unsatisfactory." The items on the rating scale are:

a. Knowledge of subject matter
b. Communication skills
c. Instructional skills
d. Establishment of a positive learning environment
e. Assessment and evaluation
f. Interpersonal skills
g. Professional attitude and behavior

The main hypothesis of the study was that there would be no significant differences in any of the comparisons of ratings. The data were submitted to an analysis of covariance, and significance was checked at the .05 level, two-tailed probabilities.

Results.

Table 1 represents the comparisons of interns, student teachers, substitute teachers, and apprenticed teachers on the two self scales--as a person and as a teacher. In the comparisons of self as a person, there were no significant differences among the four groups on the pretest, none on the posttest, and none on the pre to post scores.

The picture was somewhat different when comparing the scores on "Self as a Teacher." Of the four groups, only the Interns demonstrated a significant increase from pre to post. The Interns' mean pre-score was the lowest of the four but significantly lower than the substitute teachers only. There were no significant differences among the groups on the post scores. It should be noted that the mean scores of all four groups on both scales fell within the normalized range, as evidenced by the stanines of 4, 5, and 6.

Table 2 displays the comparisons of the self-ratings of interns, student teachers, substitute teachers, and apprenticed teachers with the ratings of them from building principals and university staff. When reviewing the mean pre-scores, only two significant differences occurred: The university mean rating of regular substitute teachers was significantly lower than the substitute teachers' mean self-rating.

Significant changes from pre to post occurred only with the Interns. Significantly higher means were found with the Interns' self-ratings in the post-testing, as well as the principals' ratings of them and the university faculty's ratings.

When reviewing the post scores, two comparisons with self-ratings were significant: Principals' ratings of the Interns were significantly higher than their self-ratings; and university faculty's ratings of substitute teachers were significantly lower than their mean self-ratings.

The other statistically significant comparisons involved the principals' ratings of the Interns, which on the posttest were consistently higher than those which they gave to the student teachers, the regular substitute teachers, and the apprenticed teachers. The University faculty's ratings showed a similar pattern on the post scores: Their ratings of the Interns were also significantly higher than their ratings of the regular substitute teachers and their ratings of the apprenticed teachers.

Table 3 displays the mean ratings by the school principals and the university faculty on the seven performance items. The Interns received significantly higher ratings by the principals than the student teachers on communication skills and interpersonal skills; higher than the substitute teachers on knowledge of subject, communication skills, instructional skills, interpersonal skills, and establishment of a positive learning

environment; and higher than the apprenticed teachers on communication skills, interpersonal skills, and establishment of a positive learning environment.

The university faculty rated the Interns significantly higher than the student teachers on interpersonal skills; higher than the substitute teachers on communication skills, instructional skills, and interpersonal skills; and higher than the apprenticed teachers on communication skills and interpersonal skills.

In other words, the Interns received consistently higher performance ratings on all items by both principals and university faculty--many of which were statistically significant --in comparison to student teachers, regular substitute teachers, and apprenticed teachers.

Discussion.

Recent national reports have called for sweeping changes in teacher-training programs. Those which seem to demonstrate the most agreement include: (1) Elimination of the undergraduate major in education; (2) in-depth concentration on an academic discipline; (3) development of graduate-level programs resulting in master's degrees in teaching; (4) greater efforts in preparing minority-group members for the classroom; and (5) innovative internships. These suggestions have been integrated in a graduate program described above--with one twist. The internship segment has been designed as a training component, front-ending the program in the form

of supervised substitute teaching, while the interns learn the art and science of the profession, and followed by a carefully monitored residency. The interns learn by watching a variety of teachers, by taking over a teacher's class and using that teacher's techniques, and by testing out those skills and approaches in a variety of classrooms and in a variety of disciplines. Experience and analysis are handled concurrently, with the interns continually checking out the reality of the principles, issues, and methods.

Learning to teach by teaching, with all the support services and resources than can be harnessed, while continually and simultaneously testing theory against practice, seems to be producing candidates for the classroom with higher perceptions of professional characteristics and higher performance ratings on the part of interns as opposed to student teachers, regular substitute teachers, and apprenticed teachers, according to the results of the study discussed here. Whether these strengths can be maintained, or exported to other parts of the country, requires further study.

In the meantime, while the university continues to collect data for assessing the effectiveness of this newer approach to train teachers, the school districts continue to request these trained and supervised substitute-teacher-interns for placement in their classrooms while evaluating their performance for possible selection as a full-time teacher the following year.

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FIGURE 1

INTERNSHIP TRAINING SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE (A)

FALL	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL
PREPARATION WORKSHOPS & 40 HOURS OF SEMINARS & SUPERVISED FIELD EXPER. & 3 ELECTIVES	12 HOURS OF SEMINARS & SUPERVISED FIELD EXPER. & 3 ELECTIVES	2 ELECTIVES	STUDENT TEACHING (IF REQUIRED FOR CERTIFICATION.)
15 CREDITS	12 CREDITS	6 CREDITS	6 CREDITS

SCHEDULE (B)

SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	SPRING
PREPARATION WORKSHOPS & 40 HOURS OF SEMINARS & SUPERVISED FIELD EXPER. & 3 ELECTIVES	2 ELECTIVES	12 HOURS OF SEMINARS & SUPERVISED FIELD EXPER. & 3 ELECTIVES	STUDENT TEACHING (IF REQUIRED FOR CERTIFICATION)
15 CREDITS	6 CREDITS	12 CREDITS	6 CREDITS

Table 1

Comparisons of Self-Perceptions
of Non-Regular Teaching Staff

Group	Scale Form					
	Self as a Person			Self as a Teacher		
	Mean	S.D.	Stanine	Mean	S.D.	Stanine
Interns (n=30)						
Pre	28.75	19.86	5	30.63	19.46	4
Post	29.99	16.50	6	41.17	13.09	5
Student Teachers (n=20)						
Pre	29.14	18.97	5	38.58	17.80	5
Post	30.03	17.74	6	40.21	15.01	5
Substitute Teachers (n=25)						
Pre	30.34	18.55	6	44.29	17.11	5
Post	30.25	18.92	6	43.47	16.98	5
Apprenticed Teachers (n=12)						
Pre	28.84	19.71	5	35.36	19.75	4
Post	28.90	18.53	5	39.82	15.73	5

* Sig.

* Sig.

* $p < .05$

NOTE: Possible range of scores on each scale is -36 to +36.

Table 2

Comparisons of Self-Ratings as a Teacher with Ratings by School and University Staff

Group	Self-Ratings Mean	Self-Ratings S.D.	Principals' Ratings (n = 35) Mean	Principals' Ratings (n = 35) S.D.	University Ratings (n = 25) Mean	University Ratings (n = 25) S.D.
Interns (n = 30)						
Pre	30.63	19.46	37.82	19.12	36.98	15.11
Post	41.17	13.09	48.83	14.08	44.70	10.24
Student Teachers (n = 20)						
Pre	38.58	17.80	38.56	18.59	36.82	17.09
Post	40.21	15.01	40.89	16.07	40.66	14.08
Substitute Teachers (n = 25)						
Pre	44.29	17.11	38.78	16.60	33.29	19.15
Post	43.47	16.98	37.10	16.00	31.22	16.25
Apprenticed Teachers (n = 12)						
Pre	35.36	19.75	38.99	17.73	35.14	18.59
Post	39.82	15.73	40.29	16.22	35.00	17.73

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

NOTE: Possible range of scores is -36 to +36.

Table 3

Comparisons of Performance Ratings

Item	(n=30) Interns (1)	(n=20) Student Teachers (2)	(n=25) Substitute Teachers (3)	(n=12) Apprenticed Teachers (4)	* Sig.
1. Knowledge of Subject					
Principals	2.0	1.3	1.0	1.7	(1)&(3)
University	1.9	1.8	1.1	1.3	-
2. Communication Skills					(1)&(2) (1)&(3) (1)&(4)
Principals	2.5	1.7	1.4	1.2	
University	2.3	2.0	.9	1.4	(1)&(3) (1)&(4) (2)&(3)
3. Instructional Skills					
Principals	2.4	1.8	1.3	1.7	(1)&(3)
University	2.2	2.0	1.1	1.4	(1)&(3) (2)&(3)
4. Estab. Positive Learn. Environ.					(1)&(4)
Principals	2.1	1.8	1.2	1.3	(1)&(3)
University	1.9	1.9	1.1	1.1	-
5. Assessment & Evaluation					
Principals	1.8	1.7	1.2	1.4	-
University	1.6	1.5	1.0	1.2	-
6. Interpersonal Skills					(1)&(2) (1)&(4)
Principals	2.6	1.7	1.4	1.6	(1)&(3)
University	2.5	1.6	1.3	1.1	(1)&(4) (1)&(3) (1)&(2)
7. Professional Attitudes					
Principals	2.4	2.3	1.8	2.3	-
University	2.3	2.3	1.5	2.0	-

*All significant comparisons reached the .05 level.

NOTE: The mean ratings were obtained on the following basis:
EXCELLENT = 3 POINTS SATISFACTORY = 2 points
UNSATISFACTORY = 1 point

APPENDIX

Examples of Scale Items

1. Self-Perception Inventory/Adult Forms--"Self as a Person"

trusting _____:_____:_____:_____ suspicious

very trusting	more trusting than suspicious	more suspicious than trusting	very suspicious

2. Self-Perception Inventory/Teacher Forms--"Self as a Teacher"

flexible _____:_____:_____:_____ rigid

very flexible	more flexible than rigid	more rigid than flexible	very rigid

3. Intern Progress Report

Adapts to new or changing situations 1 2 3 4 5 6

(KEY: 1-superior 2-above average 3-average 4-below average 5-inferior 6-no opportunities for judgment)

4. Interns' Self-Evaluation Scale

Demonstrate resourcefulness in working with pupils 1 2 3 4 5

(KEY: 1-superior 2-above average 3-average 4-below average 5-inferior)

5. Performance Rating Scale

His/her interpersonal skills are:

EXCELLENT SATISFACTORY UNSATISFACTORY